SUNDAY SERMON

A Scholarly Discourse By Rev. Lyman Abbott.

Brooklyn, N. Y.— At Plymouth Church, the Rev. Lyman Abbott, D. D., occupied his old pulpit in the absence of the present pastor, the Rev. Dr. S. D. Hillis. Dr. Abbott's subject was "The Essential Spirit of Christianity." He chose for his text the passage from Matthew xx-27-28: "Whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant, even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many," and said:

What do we mean by Christianity? What is its essential, specific spirit? It is the spirit of service. The Christian is not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The spirit of the Christian is to be like the Christ. It is to get back of all that is injurious and all that is outside; all the accretions that are injurious and all the additions which have been made in the growth of Christian thought, doctrine, ritual and institution; to get back to the time of Christ Himself, and, if we can, see what Christ literally meant when He spoke in order that we may get at the essential spirit of it.

There appeared at the beginning of the so-called Christian era a religion to teache in a province of Palestine. He was certainly for that age and for any age a singular man. The things we care for most He made of little account. He cared not for pleasure. He was not a sensitive. He did not hide Himself from the world. There is no instance in which He refused an invitation to a feast. He began His ministry by creating wine to prolong the festivities of a marriage party. He cared not for what men call pleasure. He said Himself that He "had not where to lay His head." He often failed to sleep with only the stars overhead. He lived on the simplest food. He did not care for wealth. He never owned a penny of it, and He said that was the man who spent all his life in accumulating and took no time to know what to do with the accumulations. He did not care for power, for when He was offered a crown He refused it. One day they gathered together Him, waved palm branches and shouted "Hosannah!" and amid all the joy and acclaim He stopped and wept as He remembered the sorrows which were to come upon the people.

Ambition did not appeal to Him. He was willing to preach to 5,000 or to 500 or to twenty-five or thirty, or to sit down with one poor woman by a well and talk to her by the well; and it did not make any difference. What did He care for the fame of the—so far as among men and make them happy. That was what He cared for. He cared for all sorts of men. He was equally willing to be a guest at the table of the rich. He would be as willing to serve the poor as the Christian. He was willing to save the poor and the rich. He was not a poor man's prophet, nor a rich man's prophet. He was willing to minister to the ignorant, and just as willing to minister to the wise. He would talk with the peasant, or spend an evening with one of the great rabbis at Jerusalem. Character or past conduct did not appeal to Him from His sympathy. It did not make any difference how badly a man had lived or how rotten was his character. He was ready to help him. He came into Jericho one day and the people derided and hissed at Him as they came out of a great rabbis at Jerusalem. Character or past conduct did not appeal to Him from His sympathy. It did not make any difference how badly a man had lived or how rotten was his character. He was ready to help him. He came into Jericho one day and the people derided and hissed at Him as they came out of a great rabbi